

VZCZCXRO4734

PP RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH  
DE RUEHKO #0939/01 0980424

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 070424Z APR 08

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3190

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY

RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY

RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY

RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY

INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7104

RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 9487

RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 5550

RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 7700

RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 0773

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2659

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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 9219

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000939

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CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - U.S.-RUSSIA SUMMIT, NATO SUMMIT, AND NORTH KOREA

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Top stories on Monday morning included the disruption of the Olympic torch relay in London by a group of protestors opposing the Chinese crackdown in Tibet, as well as Sunday's summit in Sochi, Russia, between President Bush and Russian President Putin. They reportedly adopted a new 'strategic framework' for bilateral cooperation, but failed to hammer out an agreement on the U.S. plan to deploy MD platforms in Eastern Europe.

¶2. "U.S., Russia Rely on 'Personal Bond'" The liberal Asahi wrote from Sochi (4/7): "President Bush and President Putin called each other by their first names and concluded their joint press conference with a handshake. However, with Russia remaining steadfastly opposed to the idea of deploying MD platforms in Eastern Europe, the summit exposed the limits of U.S.-Russia relations, which at present rely heavily on personal ties between the two leaders.... From a Russian viewpoint, the fact that President Bush met with President-elect Medvedev and hence recognized the legitimacy of the power transition at the Kremlin was the foremost accomplishment of the summit...."

¶3. "MD Deployment in Eastern Europe Proceeding in View of U.S. Initiative" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri's Washington correspondent reported from Sochi (4/7): "A gap remained between the U.S. and Russia over the former's plan to deploy MD platforms in Eastern Europe. However, Washington is set to go ahead with the plan while giving consideration to Moscow's concerns. The Bush administration is determined not to give up on its initiative to defend against ballistic missiles, which it considers a real security threat in the 21st century.... The U.S., while welcoming a recent agreement with Russia to explore the idea of establishing a joint MD system in the future, will not allow that to be used as an excuse to postpone the planned deployment."

¶4. "NATO Unity Being Tested" The business-oriented Nikkei editorialized (4/6): "French President Sarkozy has committed an additional 700 troops to Afghanistan. The French decision is welcome, as it will help with the war on terrorism. However, problems still remain. NATO is divided between those who attach importance to military operations and those who value civilian assistance. The gap between the two camps may widen in the event of a stalemate in operations to eradicate terrorists in Afghanistan. NATO unity is being tested."

¶5. "NATO Remains Cohesive Entity" The Yomiuri's European bureau chief commented (4/6): "Along with its decision to endorse the future membership of Ukraine and Georgia, NATO during its summit in Bucharest also approved membership for Croatia and Albania, while French President Sarkozy said that France will return to NATO's joint military command. With all these developments taken together, the summit appears to have proven that NATO is still a cohesive entity ready to expand further.... NATO is currently facing the critical challenge of improving security in Afghanistan. However, one cannot argue that the organization's raison d'être rests on success in nation-building in Afghanistan. From a long-term standpoint, NATO members are likely to pass the hard lessons of the Afghan operations on to the organization's next generation."

¶6. "Do Not Be Duped by Pyongyang's Provocations" The economic-oriented Nikkei insisted in an editorial (4/7): "North Korea customarily ups the ante and looks to attract international attention as a way of seeking economic aid and other benefits. South Korea is the top target of Pyongyang's brinkmanship at present. The Lee administration must not allow itself to be duped by North Korean provocations. Seoul should react in a cool-headed manner in

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coordination with the U.S. and Japan, while keeping a close eye on U.S.-DPRK nuclear negotiations."

SCHIEFFER